

BCS Board of Directors - Meeting Minutes

Brooke High School | 197 Centre St., Dorchester, MA | September 22, 2017 | 8:30 - 10:30 AM

In Attendance: Scott Oran, Alex Finkelstein, Devita McConnell, LaRoy Brantley, Trevor Rozier-Byrd, Joanna Jacobson, Charles Ledley

Also In Attendance: Kimberly Steadman, Jon Clarke, M. Scott Knox, Hagar Berlin, Yvette Phillip, Isabella Cucchi, Mark Loring, Angela Callado Kiley, Ylira Pimentel-Diaz, Aaliyah El-Amin

1. Opening items
 - a. Scott O. calls the meeting to order and asks for any public comments
 - b. Isabella C. records attendance and guests
 - c. Scott O. calls for the approval of the May Board meeting minutes
 - i. Motion to approve - Alex; seconded - LaRoy; all in favor - unanimous
2. Vote on CORI Policy
 - a. Jon provides context for CORI policy - protecting the rights of job applicants
 - b. Mark explains recent legal changes to the policy around putting CORI information online
 - c. LaRoy asks if any recruiting firms we use for hiring do their own background checks
 - i. Jon mentions that we rarely use recruiting firms to hire at BCS, but if we do, they typically do not run their own checks
 - d. Yvette adds that regardless of whether or not an external firm used CORI, BCS would have to do their own background check on the employee or volunteer as well
 - e. Scott O. calls for approval on the new CORI policy, motion for approval - Trevor, seconded - LaRoy, all in favor - unanimous
3. Vote to authorize Finance Committee to approve FY17 audit on behalf of Board at the 10/20 Finance Committee meeting
 - a. Yvette explains that the audit is due to the state Nov 1, Finance Committee meeting is not until October 20, wants to call a vote for the Finance Committee to approve FY17 audit on behalf of the Board
 - b. Scott O. calls for a vote, motion - LaRoy, seconded - Joanna, all in favor - unanimous
4. Development update
 - a. Jon shares that M. Scott Knox is transitioning to Chief People Officer, and that Hagar Berlin is now on board as Chief Development Officer
 - b. M. Scott K. provides high level figures of what has been committed so far this fiscal year and what is pending
 - i. Mentions that BCS has a strong institutional base, but that the school can do much more to expand individual prospects and broaden institutional support, which is where Hagar will be incredibly helpful
 - c. Jon provides update that BCS closed on high school facility financing on August 30, and that the project is a little bit behind schedule (contractor fully owns this responsibility, some materials were delayed in their arrival), primary loan from Boston Private, \$24M, 3.7% rate fixed for 20 years, Boston Community Loan Fund \$11.3M loan at 6.75% rate; our primary focus is to pay down the loans
 - d. M. Scott K. provides book club invitation/reminder - on campus in Boston College November 2
 - e. Hagar introduces herself, mentions that she is primarily focused on the capital campaign to build the high school, but will also be supporting fundraising for high school programming as well as general annual programming for BCS, including the annual appeal campaign

- i. Last year, annual appeal campaign raised \$85,000 for BCS, not including Board contributions
 - ii. Best in class annual appeals usually involve high level Board participation (probably 3 hours of time between now and the holidays; compiling and sharing contact lists, writing personal notes to network)
 - iii. Hagar will follow up with Board members individually and share much more information at the November Board meeting
- 5. Introduction to Aaliyah El-Amin
 - a. Jon provides context for DEI workshop - BCS currently doing a lot of internal DEI work, particularly with teaching recruitment, leadership pipeline; mentions that the ballot initiative demonstrated that families value BCS as a school, but don't necessarily view it as part of the community
 - b. Jon further explains that BCS wanted to find someone external with a broad array of DEI experience to speak to the Board, Aaliyah is at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (professor), was a former teacher and school administrator in Atlanta, has a PhD in DEI related work, and has worked for and with BCS principals around race and racism in the past
 - c. Jon shares that the purpose of the workshop is to answer the question: how might DEI work at the school level relate to the Board, and how might the Board better understand this work?
- 6. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workshop
 - a. Aaliyah introduces herself, mentions that her primary interest is in how children engage in conversation around race and racism / how children take on social justice work
 - b. Aaliyah explains the goals for the workshop: get a shared foundational understanding of things that drive issues of race and racism, discuss challenges in schools around race and racism, and practice talking about race and racism
 - c. Aaliyah notes that there are many dimensions of diversity (race, age, class, gender, etc.) - and that today the group is solely digging into race. But what does diversity, equity, and inclusion really mean? How would one define these words within this context?
 - i. Those around the table turn and talk to a partner about how they might define these words, then share out their definitions
 - ii. Aaliyah explains that the meaning of these words in the United States has changed over time
 - 1. Diversity: the conditions of having variety; different types of people, different backgrounds, different life experiences, different social identities (people often conflate the word diversity with race)
 - 2. Equity: equal access for all (particularly those typically marginalized) to opportunities, power, and corresponding benefits
 - 3. Inclusion: all (particularly those typically marginalized) can bring their perspectives, identity, and life experiences to a space. An inclusive culture embraces differences and ensures all are equally engaged.
 - iii. Aaliyah leads a conversation around guiding discussion norms
 - 1. "Nobody is out" - we all have/had racialized experiences (even if from different places of power and privilege) to draw upon. Just because you are doesn't mean you understand. Just because you aren't doesn't mean you don't.
 - 2. Race learning and cross race conversations require courage and discomfort. Mistakes will be made.
 - 3. Our goal is not to judge each other but to learn together

4. Challenge yourself to participate in the conversation and practice individually, collectively, and organizationally
 5. Ask questions
- iv. Aaliyah asks participants to share answers to the following questions with a partner:
 1. What is something on your mind that is not work-related?
 2. How often do you talk about race/racism in your daily life? How consistent has that been over time?
 3. What is one thing you fear when you have conversations about race/racism?
 - v. LaRoy brings up the term microaggression and discusses the importance of considering microaggressions in these types of conversations
 - vi. Many participants bring up their fear of being silent and/or saying the 'wrong' thing in a conversation
- d. Aaliyah mentions that fear is a natural part of conversations, regardless of whether or not they have to do with race/racism; many of our conversations are held back because we are operating from different understandings / not shared experiences; conversations can also be held back because of language
 - e. Scott O. asks about language - is it true that people who are most authentic talk the same way to everybody because they're honest about who they are? Do we become less genuine when we try to be too sensitive?
 - f. Aaliyah mentions that in this particular context, we don't want anyone to shy away from conversation just because they are nervous to say something in the 'right' way
 - g. Aaliyah moves into a conversation about the foundations of race/racism
 - i. Aaliyah asks: what is racism? How was it originally defined?
 1. Angela shares that it is a social/political construct - as a society we have given power and definition to certain colors over other colors
 - a. Category of people labeled and treated a certain way because of some common phenotype
 2. Jon mentions that slavery didn't start as a race-based system in the United States - it was something that progressed over time as the African slave trade picked up
 - a. Came to racial categories as a justification for the mistreatment of certain groups of people
 - b. Aaliyah refers to Social Darwinism / killing populations through disease
 3. Aaliyah emphasizes that race has no scientific significance
 4. Aaliyah asks the group to reflect and then turn and talk: think about the first time you remember seeing yourself as RACED? How old were you? What happened and how did you feel? How hard was it to think about a memory?
 - ii. Aaliyah references the 'doll test' and mentions that the way we are raced often depends on our social position. Children of color are often raced very early, and see themselves are raced very early. Children as early as 3 years old are able to see race and can internalize racism.
 - iii. Aaliyah asks about the difference between race and ethnicity, and notes:
 1. Ethnicity is a social category based on nationality, common language, culture

2. Race is a broad social category based on similarities in various physical characteristics
 3. In the United States, ethnicity is often subsumed by race; ethnicity is often more prevalent than race outside of the United States
 - a. She discusses the term "African American" in both academia and popular culture
 - iv. Aaliyah then reviews other foundational language, including: prejudice (belief), discrimination (behavior) and racism (system), and asks the group to consider: how is racism carried out?
 1. Individual-level racism (internal/interpersonal) vs. systemic-level racism (institutional/structural)
 - v. Aaliyah discusses the concept of racism as "smog" - it is pervasive, we are constantly breathing in messages and visualizations that help us ascribe meaning to various categories.
 1. The only way to deconstruct racism is to actively walk the other way - work against it.
 - vi. Kimberly raises the question of feeling like you have agency vs. the feeling that racism is so pervasive that perhaps we "can't do anything about it" -- how do we combat that?
 - h. Aaliyah asks: what is the point of all of this? What is the purpose of racism?
 - i. Kimberly notes that racism gives more power to a group of people that want more power by dehumanizing/devaluing another group (to maintain power in whiteness)
 - ii. Scott O. raises the point that racism and classism are often so inextricably linked
 - i. Aaliyah thanks the group, mentions that we are out of time, revisits the goal of the workshop, asks what useful next steps for the school and Board might be, and mentions she will send follow-up resources to the group via Jon
7. Closing items
- a. Jon provides an update about a recent BHS issue involving an anti-semitic remark / threats made by students online and the school's immediate responses
 - b. Joanna suggests that BCS calls the ADL
 - c. Many Board members express their questions and concerns about the issue and also recognize the incident as a learning opportunity for the BCS community
 - d. Scott O. adjourns the meeting

BCS Board of Directors - Meeting Minutes

Brooke East Boston | 94 Horace Street, East Boston, MA | November 15, 2017 | 6 - 8 PM

In Attendance: Scott Oran, LaRoy Brantley, Thomas O'Rourke Jr., Lauren Kushman, Trevor Rozier-Byrd

Also In Attendance: Kimberly Steadman, Jon Clarke, M. Scott Knox, Hagar Berlin, Yvette Phillip, Isabella Cucchi, Mark Loring, Angela Callado Kiley

Unable to Attend: Joanna Jacobson, Alex Finkelstein, Devita McConnell, Charles Ledley

1. Opening Items

- a. Scott O. calls the meeting to order and asks for any public comments
- b. Isabella C. records attendance

2. Mission Moment

- a. Jon C. explains why centering on Brooke's mission is important as a board at the beginning of meetings - making sure the board continues to stay educated about what's happening in the classrooms - and introduces three videos that celebrate teachers who have been with Brooke for 10+ years.
- b. Jon C. invites comments on the videos and on what board members would like to see in future mission moments. Trevor R. comments on how much the students in the video value the teachers and how they all remarked on the impact their teachers have had on them outside of the classroom - speaks to the fact that our teachers teach the "whole child"
- c. Jon C. celebrates Angela C. for a great Book Club event at Boston College on November 2nd, and then invites Scott O. and/or LaRoy B. to comment on Book Club.
 - i. Both comment that it was an incredible night, a great venue, students who attended were well prepared, insightful, and impressive; Steve Pemberton was outstanding, and that the students were very vulnerable during the conversation which was admirable.
- d. Jon C. encourages other members to attend the next Book Club event: Deval Patrick on March 15th.

3. Board Business

- a. Scott O. calls for the approval of the September 2017 meeting minutes. Scott O. motions, Thomas O. approves, Trevor R. seconds, unanimous approval.
- b. Scott O. calls for the approval of the Charter Accountability Plan.
 - i. Jon C. notes that this document is required by the state.
 - ii. Lauren K. asks if we can get the charter renewed even if we don't meet all of the goals in the plan; Jon C. says yes.
 - iii. Scott O. asks if there is a feedback loop on the plan? Jon C. says that when we do an annual report for compliance reasons, it is organized based on whether we met these goals or not, and we report on progress towards the goals.
 - iv. Scott O. motions, Lauren K. approves, Thomas O. seconds, unanimous approval.
- c. Scott O. calls for the review of the 2016-17 Audited Financials, per the Finance Committee's recommendation.
 - i. Yvette P. says that the audit went well and there were no findings.
 - ii. Jon C. notes that the auditor said that it was the best audit that Brooke has ever had, especially given the complexity this year; we ended the year with a \$2M surplus.

4. Brooke High Capital Campaign

- a. Hagar B. provides an update on the the resulting Capital Campaign goal and progress to date, noting the original plan was to put forward \$10.7M in Brooke equity which was inclusive of philanthropy and reserves, but after reviewing Brooke's philanthropic potential and the non-optimal interest rate on the subordinate loan, Jon C. and Hagar B. determined that the new goal will be to raise \$14M in philanthropy for the Capital Campaign and leverage what will be \$8M in reserves while still protecting 2 months of cash on hand.
 - i. Progress to date: \$7.8M raised (56% of Capital Campaign goal) in philanthropy so far this year; \$3.4M raised in high school start-up funds (counts towards the reserves).
- b. Hagar B. leads discussion about top campaign prospects and board connectivity
 - i. Hagar B. explains that Brooke has developed a fairly rigorous development pipeline system (includes discounting gifts depending on where they are in the cultivation cycle). As of today, that pipeline gets us to \$9.9M, leaving an urgent \$4M gap to identify (there are actually \$15.6M in opportunities in the pipeline, but again they are discounted)
 - ii. Thomas O. asks how the development team sources its prospects; Hagar B. explains it is from a conglomerate of sources (other charter funders, our current funders, intel from other board members, etc.).
 - iii. Board reviews prospect list and notes any connections they have.
- c. Hagar B. reminds board members to participate in the annual appeal.
- d. Scott O. remarks on a recent visit he had to Brooke High School, Hagar B. and Jon C. - said that the tour was incredible and productive and highly recommends others invite their networks to tour the high school as well.

5. 2017 MCAS Results Presentation

- a. Kimberly S. leads review of changes to the state assessment in 2016-17; what the MCAS assessment looked like
 - i. High School MCAS includes an ELA assessment in 10th grade, Math in 10th grade, Science in 9th grade or 10th grade (at Brooke - Biology for 9th graders). Students can retake MCAS exams in 11th and/or 12th grade; they have to pass all three exams to graduate high school.
 - ii. 3rd-8th grade state assessments for past 2 years, Brooke participated in the PARCC assessment (there was an option at the time); In 2017, Brooke returned to the MCAS (MCAS 2.0) - the exam is significantly different than it used to be, and more difficult than it used to be.
 - 1. Bigger focus on composition (more points, conventions graded on every grade level), higher bars and different names for levels
 - 2. Overall, results across the state are way down on the MCAS 2.0, which is not necessarily a bad thing (good to have a rigorous assessment, etc.)
- b. Kimberly S. reviews Brooke's scores
 - i. Brooke High School (9th grade Biology MCAS) scored #1 in the state and #1 in Boston with 99% of students scoring proficient; and 8th in the state and 1st in the city with 70% of students scoring advanced.
 - ii. 3rd - 8th grade network results
 - 1. All of our results are shared externally as one network, not as individual schools (internally, principals get school-specific scores, teachers get grade/classroom specific scores, etc.)
 - 2. Relative to the state and city we are doing well and are still the highest performing charter school in the state. Compared to other districts across

the state, however, Brooke as a district fell to 41st in Math and 108th in ELA. Statewide scores show a bigger achievement gap than existed in past assessments (socioeconomically elite districts performed better on this MCAS). Brooke's internal network assessments were down last year as well, so the results were not surprising, but disappointing

3. We have already made some adjustments:
 - a. Staffing changes
 - i. LaRoy B. asked about whether the staffing changes were made before the test results were received, Kimberly S. said yes. Some teachers asked not to return to Brooke this year, others shifted focus areas and are teaching single subjects or are leading small group instruction
 - b. Making data more actionable
 - c. Rebooting Brooke's Associate Teacher Program
 - d. Redesigning Content Professional Development
 - e. Improving grammar instruction
4. We are also moving forward with additional adjustments
 - a. Recommitment to our 'hedgehog concept' (Good to Great by Jim Collins reference): great teaching
 - b. Resetting a culture of urgency and high expectations

6. Strategic Planning

- a. Jon C. talks about the opportunity to focus on strategic planning given that Brooke is not growing (due to the MA ballot initiative outcome) - Strategic Grant Partners (SGP) is facilitating a data collection process to precede our strategic plan. SGP is excited that Brooke has a lot of quantitative data (and strong data) which makes the analysis process easier. Data will be collected by the end of the calendar year and Brooke will present it to the board in February.
- b. Jon C. mentions that the purpose of the strategic planning process is to ground ourselves in our mission and theory of change - also mentions that the full Brooke staff revisited our mission and theory of change during an all staff retreat in the fall.
 - i. Review of our mission: great teaching can close the achievement gap - and we grow best when we grow together. Review of our hedgehog concept and why focusing on great teaching matters most.
 - ii. Review of initiatives Brooke could take on, and discussion around which of those initiatives fit within our hedgehog concept, and similarly, review of the things that we could stop focusing on because they don't meet our hedgehog concept
 - iii. Discussion of Brooke's philosophy of a strict/warm teaching style, importance of Brooke students feeling both challenged and known
- c. Trevor R. mentions that the theory of change and mission all seem to be the right focus, but brings up the ballot initiative and notes that we were taken by surprise; the community might not have been receiving us in the way that we intended; we need to bridge that disconnect and ingrain ourselves in the community while still staying core to our mission and being a leader. Jon C. concurs and mentions that being a strong community partner is still a goal for Brooke - this exercise is mostly around why our hedgehog concept should be one very specific, focused thing we do well.
- d. Board engages in conversation around what makes Brooke unique in our approach to great teaching, and given those things, what are the right initiatives to take on? ("If you

are so great at teaching, then why not take on initiatives like parent education? Why professional development?")

- i. Lauren K. asked how teachers reacted to the presentation on our mission and theory of change / asks whether Brooke has pressure tested this with parents
 1. Jon C. says that he believes it was well received among teachers, notes again that that presentation was different than our strategic planning process.
 2. Hagar B. mentions that one part of SGP's work in the early stages of this strategic planning process is gathering and reviewing qualitative data as well as our quantitative data, especially via focus groups which include some teachers.
- ii. Scott O. and Jon C. lead clarification discussion around strategic planning process vs. presentation about what are Brooke's mission and theory of change - reminder that the strategic planning process is not an attempt to change our mission.

7. Closing Items

- a. Jon C. and Kimberly S. invite the board to continue the conversation about the MCAS results and the strategic planning process offline any time.
- b. Scott O. adjourns the meeting.

BCS Board of Directors - Meeting Minutes

Brooke Roslindale | 190 Cummins Highway, Roslindale, MA | February 7, 2018 | 12 - 2 PM

In Attendance: Scott Oran, Alex Finkelstein, Devita McConnell, Thomas O'Rourke

Also In Attendance: Jon Clark, Kimberly Steadman, Scott Knox, Hagar Berlin, Yvette Philip, Isabella Cucchi

In Attendance Via Phone: Charles Ledley, Joanna Jacobson, LaRoy Brantley

Unable to Attend: Lauren Kushman

1. Opening Items
 - a. Scott O. calls the meeting to order, takes attendance, and asks for any public comments
 - b. Isabella C. records attendance
2. Mission Moment
 - a. Kimberly S. presents our new online instructional resources (resources.ebrooke.org; video collection that highlights the elements of effective instruction) that are meant to showcase Brooke's great teaching in action and share with others what great lessons look like at Brooke. These videos are used during new teacher training as well as for dissemination purposes.
 - i. Alex F. asks if the videos are password protected, and Kimberly answers that they are not, they are meant for broad dissemination for other educators, parents, and anyone else who might want to see Brooke teachers in action
 - ii. Alex F. asks how we are going to promote the videos and increase Brooke's brand awareness. Hagar B. answers that we are going to blast it out to our mailing list and social media platforms, and shares that we are also working with Charter School Growth Fund on a communication plan for this new microsite. Hagar notes that this resource will be particularly interesting for other educators when they are planning their summer professional development sessions, and that we'll do another blast to our networks around that time, as we will have our professional development videos up on the microsite by that time.
 - iii. Scott O. asks whether other schools do video dissemination, Kimberly S. shares that some other schools do it, but Brooke invested in getting professional videographers to support the project
 - iv. Jon C. shares that this will be a great visual tool for Brooke to use to demonstrate our students' achievement to our stakeholders, not just for educators
 - v. Kimberly S. notes that a lot of our visitors ask for more resources and we are glad that we can now point them in this direction
3. Board Business
 - a. Vote to approve the board meeting minutes from November 15, 2017's meeting
 - i. Vote postponed until our board retreat given the attendance
4. Nominating and Governance Discussion
 - a. Scott O. notes that the Governance Committee has met twice since the last board meeting and has determined that we have the capacity to add board members. More members would allow us to have more committees, be more productive, and diversify our skill set.
 - b. Board reviews Governance Committee's proposed:
 - i. Board recruitment goals
 1. Scott shares that we currently have nine members, and our bylaws allow us to go to thirteen members. Goal is to add two members this year, and identify three to five people to add next year or the year after.

- ii. Board prospect matrix
 - 1. Scott notes that the governance committee started by looking at the current composition of our board and created a skills assessment template which notes the type of skills we currently have on our board and the skills we might find among prospective members.
 - 2. Scott shares that we adopted the skills matrix from nonprofit board resources.
 - iii. Proposed slate of board candidates - Hagar B. invites members to nominate additional board prospects
5. Fundraising and Financial Update
- a. Jon C. gives an update on Brooke High School, shares that the high school construction is on budget so far and moving along quickly, but is not on time (somewhere between two to three weeks behind schedule.) We have used some of our overtime allowance to keep up, but are trying to be strategic. The cold spell put us back a little bit, as did the delay in the delivery of some materials, which the construction company owned. We are still confident we can make most if not all of the time up. We are in a great place and it's very exciting. We are hoping that in March at our board retreat we can take a tour as a group.
 - b. Jon invites board members to visit Brooke High
 - c. Hagar gives updates on the capital campaign
 - i. We have made some progress but have a lot more to do. Shifted our target based on the final financing of the building. Decided to fund the rest of the \$42.5MM project with accumulated reserves and philanthropy - specifically, our philanthropic goal is \$14MM. When we last met, shared that we had a pathway to \$9.9MM and had raised \$7.8MM, we now have a pathway towards \$10.7MM with \$8.4MM raised, which is progress but we still have a ways to go. We have been working closely with board members and with Jon and Brooke's leadership team on ways to close that gap.
 - ii. There are a number of very large swing gifts in our pipeline, including individuals and national foundations. Growing our list of prospects is still top priority, and we are always open to your feedback on that list. A last resort option would be going back to donors who have already invested and seeing if they are interested in giving again at the tail end of the campaign.
 - iii. We are simultaneously raising money for HS program operating funds - not just capital. If we do well with operating fundraising, it will help the capital campaign because it will change how we use our tuition dollars.
 - iv. Alex F. asks what happens if we don't hit our philanthropic goal. Hagar answers that we end up paying more in facilities costs per year because we have to take on debt that is unfavorable. Jon adds that we have the debt already, we are just trying to pay it off. If we don't raise the money, it's just a hit to the operating budget. He mentions that we are talking about refinancing.
6. Strategic Planning
- a. Jon reminds the board of Brooke's strategic plan process and that we are focused on strengthening Brooke in the next few years. Mentions that we have worked closely with the team at Strategic Grant Partners on this project - SGP has led the data collection and presentation process.
 - b. Board reviews Strategic Grant Partners' materials
 - i. Jon highlights the strengths that SGP found: achievement is still very strong at Brooke. Still highest performing non-exam school in Boston. Survey results are very strong among all stakeholders (students, teachers, staff, parents). Staff

retention ranks highly among our charter peers. Only Bridge Boston had higher parent evaluations than Brooke, and Brooke had the highest response rate on surveys across the board.

- ii. Hagar mentions that another strength found by SGP is that Brooke alumni are higher performing than BPS in college matriculation and persistence.
 1. Even without BHS, Brooke alumni are outperforming their peers at every milestone, but we know our kids can be doing way more.
 2. Joanna J. mentions that there is plenty of data that shows keeping kids through high school affects both their enrollment and persistence through college. She also mentioned that Brooke could expand its definition of college to include military and certificates.
- iii. Jon shares SGP's findings around areas for improvement:
 1. Despite the fact that Brooke's student achievement is high and that our survey results are high for all stakeholders, in almost all cases they are off their high mark from a couple of years ago.
 2. Tom O. asks how Brooke thinks about the focus on tests and performance vs. the wholistic Brooke experience, Jon mentions that when student and staff surveys are also down from their high as well, it is clear that culture and academic performance correlate, but that of course we don't want to solely be assessment focused.
 3. Jon notes that he and Kimberly think a lot about what the most immediate explanation is for why our results are off track, and that he and Kimberly have done a lot of visits to schools and classrooms to determine this:
 - a. In many classes, Jon and Kimberly still see teachers conducting lessons as strong as ever; students are engaged and culture is strong. However, there seems to be less consistency with culture - middle school culture in particular.
 - b. Scott O. asks whether external factors like the national political climate could play a role in the decline, Kimberly says yes, it could.
 4. Jon shares that having a better sense of who we are and what we are about will help - our mission (college prep); theory of change (great teaching); vision of what great teaching is; organizational values .
 - a. Need to focus particularly on great teaching and ensure there is clarity among staff on what warm/strict teaching means, and what challenged/known means.
 - b. Alex F. asks who owns teacher professional development right now, and what that looks like.
 - i. Kimberly shares that this year, it looks a little bit different - four week content cycles, suggested by our external facilitator. So far, teacher feedback has been that it feels like a good deep college level course on important issues (largely about race/racism) but that teachers are not sure how it informs their instruction or play out in their day to day work with kids.
 - ii. Jon C. mentions that all of us recognize that talking about issues of race has been a missing component in Brooke's school culture and that it historically has been a

weakness of ours. There are ways we can deliver stronger cultures in our schools and classrooms that incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion. We have to make that tangible for teachers.

- c. Jon summarizes the strategic planning focus areas
 - i. Bolstering academics and culture
 - ii. Staff recruitment and retention plan
 - iii. Better connecting operations and instruction
 - iv. Resource allocation and development
 - 1. Long-term budget
 - 2. Network staffing plan
 - 3. Development plan
 - v. Jon emphasizes his belief that we need to have stronger ties to the communities we serve, and that we have to know how we can do that in a way that honors our central mission and goal, which is to give our kids a great education. By doing that well, by diversifying our staff and leadership, by solidifying what a good classroom culture looks like, we will in the process develop stronger community ties.
 - vi. Devita asks what the auditorium is going to look like for the high school - can it be a community asset? Jon shares that it will hold 650 students and that it will be available to the community when we are not using it.
 - vii. Tom asks if we have tied goals to each facet of the strategic plan? Jon says that is the next phase.
 - d. Jon shares the next steps for the strategic planning process
 - i. How can the board be involved in the process?
 - 1. Providing input and feedback, creating a plan for board development and growth to serve this plan, to include understanding our mission and theory of change and becoming culture carriers, working on the long term plan for resource allocation, determining long-term role for philanthropy (development committee), clearly spelling out what are the conditions under which brooke would grow
7. Closing Items
- a. Scott O. adjourns the meeting

BCS Board of Directors - Meeting Notes: March Retreat

Brooke Mattapan | 150 American Legion Highway, Mattapan, MA | March 28, 2018 | 6 PM - 9 PM

In Attendance: Alex Finkelstein, Scott Oran, Devita McConnell, Joanna Jacobson, Trevor Rozier-Byrd, Tom O'Rourke, Lauren Kushman

Also In Attendance: Yvette Philip, Scott Knox, Isabella Cucchi, Hagar Berlin, Jon Clark, Kimberly Steadman, Abby Waldman, Meg Parquette, Danielle Blair, Elza Matthieu, Mark Loring

Unable to Attend: LaRoy Brantley, Charles Ledley

- I. Opening Items
 - A. Scott O. calls the meeting to order, takes attendance, and asks for any public comments
 - B. Isabella C. records attendance
- II. Mission Moment - Brooke Principal Panel
 - A. Board members meet four members of Brooke's instructional leadership team (3 principals, one assistant principal)
 - B. Board members engage in Q&A with Brooke school leaders (facilitated by Kimberly S.).
Questions included:
 1. What has been your career trajectory?
 2. What do you think sets Brooke apart from other schools?
 3. How would you describe/how do you think about your role as principal?
 4. Can you talk about a student that you have had an impact on/had a significant relationship with?
 5. How do you work to develop teachers?
 6. Are you able to quickly identify which teachers might struggle - how do you support them?
 7. How do you all work together as a network of principals across campuses?
 8. Can you share one goal that you have for yourself in the next 6-12 months?
 9. How do you reconcile hiring the perfect person vs. hiring someone because you need someone in the role ASAP?
 10. How do you deal with middle schoolers/how do you help them love school again?
- III. Board Business
 - A. Scott O. calls for a vote to approve the November and February board meeting minutes
 1. Suggested change to the November minutes - remove potential donor names
 2. Motioned by Devita M., seconded by Joanna J., minutes approved pending changes to November minutes
 - B. Jon C. shares that Brooke is extending our school year by one day due to the number of snow days we have had this year
 - C. Board reviews the updated board nominations matrix, especially the newer board nominees. Hagar B. shares that our goal is to add two new board members in FY18
- IV. Fundraising Update
 - A. Update on Brooke High School capital campaign
 1. Hagar B. shares that the biggest need is to get introductions to potential donors and current prospects
- V. Strategic Planning Discussion
 - A. Part I: Overall Process Update & Discussion of Culture of Academic Achievement
 1. Jon C. reviews strategic priorities: bolstering academics and culture, recruiting and retaining great teachers (particularly teachers of color), better connecting operations and instruction, resource allocation and development (long-term

budget, staffing plan for network office, fundraising plan), and shares that in May, we'll have a thorough plan that will map out how we'll reach the above objectives

2. Trevor R. asks how college persistence fits into our strategic plan
 - a) Jon C. explains that college persistence is a key measure for our first goal above (our mission is to get our students to and through college and that is how we measure success), and that we are specifically focused on Brooke High
 - b) Kimberly S. shares that we have a whole college counseling team that focuses on college planning, placement, and persistence
3. Tom O. asks how we track results over time; Jon C. answers that we track every cohort and release reports in May, our data gets better and more reliable every year
4. Jon C. notes that at Brooke's last network-wide professional development session on March 7, 2018, we reviewed our strategic plan with teachers and school staff and selected readings from *Young, Gifted and Black* to engage school staff in a conversation about our culture and specifically, discuss, in a research-based way, what a culture of achievement looks like for students (particularly students of color)
5. Board members read excerpts from the selected readings from *Young, Gifted and Black* and compare what culture of achievement looks like at Brooke
 - a) Board members discuss the importance of schools setting the bar high for *everyone* and creating a culture where all students are expected to achieve; discuss importance of not tracking students, specifically in high school
 - b) Kimberly shares Brooke value of community and lifting one another up/growth mindset vs. individualism/a competitive school model
 - c) Board engages on how to best support students who aren't meeting expectations and how to give them the tools and strategies to meet the standards, how to develop students' identities as achievers

B. Part II: Update on Long Term Budgeting Process, Findings To Date, & Next Steps

1. Jon C. shares that the finance committee is working on a year-long project designed to help us better estimate our long term expenses and revenues; the group will have a long-term report in May; Ray Xi, member of the finance committee, put together long term compensation model
 - a) Brooke has moved away from a bonus model and towards a performance-based compensation model to both attract and retain great teachers (created raise categories, now making higher starting offers), our new model is much more competitive with BPS and over time, Brooke teachers can make more than they would at BPS
 - b) Review of long-term compensation model
 - (1) Trevor R. asks if we will consider our expense rates and debt service in our long term plan, and Yvette P. shares that is the next stage of the project
 - (2) Devita M. asks if we are looking externally to hire great teachers as well - not just developing our own. Kimberly S. and Jon C. say yes

C. Part III: Talent Report Findings & Discussion

1. Board decides to move this to the next meeting

VI. Closing Items

A. Scott O. adjourns the meeting

BCS Board of Directors - Meeting Notes: May 2018

Brooke Mattapan | 150 American Legion Highway, Mattapan, MA | May 23, 2018 | 7:45AM - 9:45AM

In Attendance: Scott Oran, Devita McConnell, LaRoy Brantley, Joanna Jacobson, Charles Ledley, Lauren Kushman, Sherif Nada, Richard (Rick) Burnes

Also In Attendance: Jon Clark, Kimberly Steadman, Hagar Berlin, Scott Knox, Yvette Philip, Mark Loring, Isabella Cucchi, Sarah Holden

In Attendance Via Telephone: Trevor Rozier-Byrd

Unable to Attend: Thomas O'Rourke, Alex Finkelstein

- I. Mission Moment
 - A. Brooke board and staff members meet at the Brooke Mattapan cafeteria
 - B. Group observes Brooke Mattapan scholars and staff's 'morning motivation' meeting
- II. Opening Items
 - A. Scott O. calls the meeting to order, takes attendance, and asks for any public comments
 - B. Isabella C. records attendance
- III. Board Best Practices Panel
 - A. Scott O. introduces Sherif Nada and Richard (Rick) Burnes
 - B. Board experts Sherif Nada and Rick Burnes answer pre-determined questions about how to build/engage an excellent board of directors
 1. How did you decide to get involved in philanthropy, and specifically, education philanthropy?
 2. What board / philanthropic experiences of yours have been most influential or meaningful and why?
 3. How do you balance collegiality and frankness?
 4. What makes a good board member?
 5. What does a great board look and feel like?
 6. If you've had any experiences on boards that were not fulfilling or there was some sort of breakdown, can you explain what you think were the root causes of the breakdown?
 - C. Panelists take open questions from Brooke board members
 1. Who holds the responsibility of determining the culture of a board? Of a school?
 2. Can you comment on the best practices for committee work and committee composition? Are there certain committees every board must have?
 3. What do you find is the optimal number of board members?
 4. What is the best way for board members to stay connected to the work (students and families)?
 - D. Panelists discuss importance of specificity in determining roles of board members and board committees, importance of passion and commitment alignment, importance of board member preparedness and participation, and importance of leadership
- IV. Board Business
 - A. Vote to approve the March board meeting minutes
 1. Joanna J. motions to approve, Devita M. seconds the motion
 2. Unanimous meeting minutes approved
 - B. Vote to approve board officer positions for the upcoming school year
 1. Charlie L. motions to approve, Joanna J. seconds the motion
 2. Unanimous approval
 - C. Review miscellaneous business:
 1. Fundraising update

- a) A few large grant applications are pending that we feel confident about, the foundations seem very invested in and intrigued by our work
 - b) We have had a couple of corporate meetings that have led to continued conversations and some traction, specifically relating to our computer science work
 - c) Upcoming service day - call for volunteers
 - 2. FY19 board calendar
 - a) Hagar asks if any board members have conflicts with the proposed dates
 - b) A few members did have conflicts - Hagar will send new proposed dates to the group
 - 3. Board nominations matrix
 - 4. Brooke staffing and recruitment report
 - a) Joanna J. asks if we are where we want to be with recruitment
 - b) Jon C. answers yes, we are in a strong place, although we are still trying to hire more associate teachers, specifically associate teachers of color
 - c) Board members discuss the importance (or not) of teachers receiving a Masters degree
 - d) Lauren K. asks what retention looks like for existing teachers this year?
 - e) Kimberly S. answers that right now, we are hovering around 82% retention, similar to years past
 - D. Acknowledge departing board member: Joanna Jacobson
- V. Short and Long Term Financial Planning
 - A. Update on strategic planning
 - B. Discuss the long term financial model, especially tuition and teacher compensation projections over 10 years
 - 1. Two areas to deep dive into: per pupil tuition and total revenues (how are we looking at that over time?) as well as salaries (in particular, instructional salaries)
 - 2. Operating cash flow is in the positive, able to cover all debt and expenditures
 - 3. Currently looking at opportunities to pay down the debt, particularly the debt from the BHS capital project
 - 4. Jon C. notes that all extra money will go towards paying down our debt
 - C. Vote to approve the FY19 Brooke Charter Schools budget
 - 1. Scott O. asks for a motion to approve
 - 2. Lauren K. motions
 - 3. Charlie L. seconds
 - 4. Unanimous approval of the budget
- VI. Executive Session
- VII. Closing Items
 - A. Scott O. adjourns the meeting

Commented [1]: Jon/HB - do you think I need public notes for this? I left the room...